

Paying for involvement guidance

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1. Introduction

This guidance sets out the principles and practice for the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses. It also suggests some of the ways the CCG might recognise the contributions and skills of patients, carers and members of the public who are involved in our work.

The guidance applies to individual patients, carers and members of the public who help the CCG with their work. It covers those who are resident in Kirklees. It does not apply to paid staff of other organisations or to our work with national or local charities or voluntary and community organisations, including Community Voices.

The CCG is committed to working with patients, carers, and members of the public at every stage of the commissioning cycle and engaging them in the planning and designing of services and improving experience and outcomes. Many individuals and groups already give up their time and provide the CCG with enthusiasm and expertise without any formal structured support or recognition. This guidance should encourage people to feel supported and valued for their contribution.

Some individuals and groups experience barriers to involvement. The approach described below will help us to involve a wide range of people in our work.

2. Purpose

This guidance sets out the CCGs' approach to paying for involvement and the responsibilities of our staff in this respect. It seeks to ensure that the CCG takes a consistent approach to reimbursing out of pocket expenses when working with patients, carers and members of the public. It also explains the implications for those on state benefits and supports them to make an informed choice about claiming expenses.

3. The principles of good practice

With regards to reimbursing and recognising patients, carers and members of the public we will ensure:

- Paperwork to claim reimbursement is kept to a minimum. Where paperwork is necessary to safeguard both staff and members of the public, it should be accessible and easy to understand.
- There is an adequate budget available to cover the costs associated with reimbursing patients, carers and members of the public.
- Patients, carers and members of the public will not be left out of pocket or put at risk of being financially worse off as a result of their involvement.
- Patients, carers and members of the public are given the right information at the right time to be able to make an informed choice about how and on what terms they want to be involved.
- The contribution made by patients, carers and members of the public can be recognised and valued in a variety of ways, such as being thanked, receiving positive feedback and acknowledgement, training or seeing the impact of the work and changes made as a result of their involvement with the CCG.

- A wide range of people with different needs and experiences are encouraged and supported to be involved. The way reimbursement of expenses is settled should not create barriers that deter people from being involved.

4. Payment

Nationally, there is a difference of opinion about whether or not the NHS should pay members of the public to get involved. Having considered various points of view, the CCG has decided not to pay individuals for patient and public involvement activities as we believe it could undermine the ethos of that involvement. However, we will pay legitimate out of pocket expenses incurred by individuals in line with the guidance below.

This guidance relates only to payments to individuals. It does not include circumstances where the CCG commissions third party organisations to undertake public engagement or market research on our behalf.

5. Reimbursement

5.1 Who should be reimbursed out of pocket expenses?

This guidance applies to patients, carers and members of the public who have accepted an invitation by the CCG to take part in a meeting, training event, interview panel, discussion groups or a defined task or work programme.

Expenses will not routinely be reimbursed where an individual chooses to attend a meeting in public or a drop-in session. Or when people choose to respond or comment on open access engagement opportunities, for example by responding to online surveys.

In addition, it does not cover:

- Payment of expenses for individuals who are representing an external organisation
- Meetings/events that have been organised by other organisation(s)
- Expenses such as computer, telephone, stationery costs
- Charges for illegal/unlawful parking, parking on private property and overstay penalties/charges
- Any other driving-related fines or penalties
- Any damage caused to any private car, motorbike or any other vehicle
- Any theft or loss of belongings, while the patients, carers and members of the public is engaged on CCG business
- Tips, for example, in restaurants or taxis

5.2 Types of expenses

5.2.1 Travel

Reimbursement for travel will be offered in full for any pre-agreed involvement. This may include travel tickets, mileage and taxi fares.

- **Car mileage** is paid at the current staff rate for non-regular user.
- **Car parking** - expenses will be paid if the car parking ticket /receipt is provided.

The individual needs to ensure that their vehicle is insured, taxed and is legally road worthy.

- **Taxi fares** – will only usually be covered if there is a mobility or access issue. Wherever possible and appropriate, individuals should be encouraged to share taxis or use public transport to minimise costs. Taxi journeys must be pre-booked by the CCGs using their existing arrangements/account, not individually by members of the public. Taxi companies used by the CCG must hold the vulnerable adults' certificate.
- **Public transport** – trains outside the local area should be booked by the CCG. Bus / train fares inside the Kirklees area will be reimbursed on production of the original ticket or receipt.

5.2.2 Subsistence

Patients, carers and members of the public can be provided with meals, free of charge, during the course of their involvement if it takes place during a lunch or evening period.

5.2.3 Costs incurred from replacement care and individual support needs

To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be involved, the CCG will reimburse pre-agreed costs incurred to enable an individual to participate, such as interpreters, signers for people who are deaf or personal care assistants. However, the exact arrangements must be discussed between the individual and the CCG and agreed in advance.

Childcare and substitute care costs will only be reimbursed when the care is provided by a Registered Person(s). Evidence of this will be required.

- **Childcare/care relief** - costs will only be met where there is no alternative solution. If approval is given, terms of reimbursement must be agreed before any costs are incurred for childcare.
- **Alternative care** - (where “alternative care” relates to professional care workers), for patients, carers and members of the public who have a caring role (where “caring role” denotes unpaid care provided by family members and/or friends) this will be paid in line with the Direct Payments scheme or current care rates charged by an agency. This will depend upon which method of alternative care the carer is currently using.

Alternative care costs will only be met where there is no alternative solution. Wherever possible, patients, carers and members of the public should make every effort to organise their commitment to fit around their existing responsibilities. They must inform the CCG person responsible for them that they are claiming these costs and agree terms of reimbursement, before any costs are incurred for alternative care. This will require providing the CCG with an invoice.

- **Personal assistants** - a personal assistant is someone who provides care in order that an individual is able to participate in an involvement activity. Costs should be paid in line with the Direct Payments scheme or current care rates charged by an agency. An

agency should only be used where there is no other provision and an invoice will be required.

- **Accessible information** - this includes the provision of information in alternative formats such as easy read or braille, and in alternative / community languages. It also includes the arrangement of professional communication support to enable individuals to participate effectively in meetings and events, for example British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters. The exact arrangements must be discussed between the individual and the CCG and agreed in advance.

5.3 People in receipt of state benefits

The CCG recognises that many people who get involved with us may be in receipt of state benefits. In general, people who are claiming out of pocket expenses can do so without an adverse impact on their benefit entitlements. However, people who receive anything that might be deemed to be earnings or income by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs service (HMRC) or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) may put their benefit entitlement in jeopardy.

It is the responsibility of the individual to comply with the conditions of their benefits. Anyone claiming state benefits should seek advice from the benefits agency or the Citizens Advice Bureau before making a claim for expenses from the CCG.

The CCG will provide information to individuals to help them make a decision about taking part in any engagement or involvement activities. We can also support individuals by providing a letter detailing the activity undertaken as well as the out of pocket expenses incurred.

5.4 Staff responsibilities

CCG staff have a responsibility to:

- Reimburse expenses to people who have made an agreement with the CCG about getting involved in accordance with the principles set out in this document.
- Discuss with an individual the costs they are likely to incur in the course of their involvement before the involvement starts.
- Be prepared to reimburse a range of expenses, not just travel.
- Provide help for people who find forms difficult to fill in.
- Make this document available to members of the public.
- Make sure that, where practical, staff who are authorised signatories are available at meetings so expenses can be reimbursed without delay.
- Provide individuals with a named contact for them to discuss any expenses queries.

It is recognised that an individual's needs may be complex and/or fall outside the detail covered by this guidance. In such circumstances, CCG staff are encouraged to exercise their discretion, while ensuring that they adhere to the underlying aims and principles contained within this document.

6. Recognition

Each year, many individuals give up their time and provide the CCG with the benefit of their experience, expertise and support. The CCG can recognise their contribution in many different ways, for example, by:

- Thanking them for getting involved.
- Explaining how their contribution has had an impact.
- Offering people opportunities to learn new skills eg via training or learning events.
- Through media/social media coverage.
- By nominating people/projects for awards.
- Acknowledging what local people have said in our engagement reports and at public events.

7. Process for claiming out of pocket expenses

Wherever possible, expenses should be paid direct to the supplier of the service/goods who should submit an invoice to the CCG.

With the exception of mileage, all other expenses will only be paid when supported by a valid receipt/ticket.

Expenses will normally be paid on the day of the involvement activity, and the individual will be reimbursed in cash.

7.1 Budget responsibility

CCG staff wishing to engage patients, carers and members of the public must ensure that they have allocated a suitable budget for the payment of expenses and any other related support, for example, training.

7.2 Claim form

- Claims must be submitted on the approved CCG expenses claim form (see appendix A). Guidelines for completing the form are included on the claim form.
- A copy of this form must be made available to all patients, carers and members of the public.
- Individuals should submit the completed claim form to the engagement or commissioning lead responsible for the involvement activity, together with any necessary receipts, tickets or invoices.
- The engagement or commissioning lead responsible for the involvement activity should then check the claim form and receipts, tickets or invoices to ensure that the form has been completed in accordance with the guidelines before signing it.
- If the claim form has not been completed correctly, or where items are not clear (or where receipts/tickets are not provided), these should be checked and clarified, as necessary, with the individual before authorisation is given.
- It is the responsibility of the individual to inform the benefits agency that they have received expenses for involvement.

7.3 Overview of reimbursement rates

The following table details the proposed reimbursement rates to be offered for involvement fees and out-of-pocket expenses.

The final decision about the sum to be reimbursed rests with the programme lead, or budget holder in charge of costs for an event.

Type	Level of payment
Child care costs/Care Cover/PA	By arrangement with production of a copy of registration and with prior agreement
Replacement Carer	By arrangement and subject to prior agreement
Bus or train fares	On production of valid receipt
Petrol costs (car mileage)	Same reimbursement rates as for staff (may be a rate which is non-taxable)
Taxi fares	By arrangement
Stationary, phone calls necessary for the involvement task	Cost price

Patient and Public Engagement Claim Form

Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Contact telephone number:	
Email address:	

Travel Expenses

Method travel E.g: car, train, bus	Date	Name of group / meeting	Journey		Car mileage	Public transport / taxi	Amount claimed
			From	To			
					TOTAL		£

(Please attach receipt, used train and bus tickets as evidence of journey)

Other Expenses

Expense Eg: carer	Date	Amount
		TOTAL £

I understand that payments will be paid gross without any deductions, and I am personally responsible for any payments of tax. I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the benefits agency of any earnings which could affect my benefits.

You are advised to contact your local benefits agency office or Citizens Advice Bureau if you are in any doubt about the effects payments may have on your benefits.

Signed: _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____
(Service user / carer)

Signed: _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____
(Authorising member of staff)

Please return this form together with all receipts to: (NAME OF TEAM RESPONSIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT)

For office use only

Authorised by Administrator:

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____ Code _____

Guidance notes for completing the form:

Name: This is the name of the service user or carer

Address: This is the home address of the service user or carer

Date: This is the date of the meeting attended

Name of meeting/group: This is the name of the meeting or group you are involved with

Car mileage: If you use your own car to travel to a meeting, please record the total number of miles for the return trip. You will be reimbursed at the agreed rate of the organisation.

Public transport / taxi: Please attach all receipts for travel by these means. Taxis are usually booked by the organisation and in this instance the section does not need to be completed. Please record the cost of the journey in the total box.

Care costs: Please ask the care provider to invoice us direct